

# PARENT & FAMILY

## NEWSLETTER

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### FROM THE HILL

As the academic year nears its final weeks, the campus is filled with moments of pride, reflection, and celebration. Students are busy showcasing the culmination of their work through senior capstone exhibitions, performances, concerts, and guest lectures, while the college prepares to highlight outstanding scholarship and creativity at the annual Academic Symposium.

In this month's newsletter, you'll find key updates to help families prepare for the transition to summer and the year ahead. Returning students are reminded to **file the FAFSA**, an important step in securing financial aid for the upcoming academic year. As finals approach, we're also sharing campus resources and strategies designed to help students manage end of semester stress and finish strong.

For families of graduating seniors, Commencement is just around the corner. The official [Commencement webpage](#) includes everything you'll need to know as the celebration approaches, including ceremony details and information about this year's Commencement speaker. We encourage families to bookmark this page and check back often as the big day gets closer.

Wishing you and your student all the best as they push through the final few weeks of the semester!



Christine Moran  
AVP of Student Success



Heidi Reigel '97  
AVP of Constituent Engagement

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### COMMENCEMENT



Celebrate your favorite graduate!

Saturday, May 23, at 2 p.m.

Please visit our [Commencement webpage](#) for up-to-date information.



Sunburst McDaniel College necklace.

Need a gift to commemorate Commencement or another special occasion in your Green Terror's life? Shop the exclusive [McDaniel College Jewelry Collection](#) for bracelets, necklaces, cufflinks, and more!

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## **IMPORTANT UPCOMING ACADEMIC DATES**

May 8

Undergraduate classes end

May 9-10	Reading days
May 11	Undergraduate exams begin
May 15	Undergraduate exams end
May 15	Semester ends
May 23	Commencement

The complete academic calendar is available [online](#).

### **Academic Support for a Strong Finish**

As students wrap up the semester, complete major projects, and prepare for finals, now is the perfect time to remind them to take advantage of McDaniel's academic support resources. [The Writing Center](#) offers personalized support for students at any stage of the writing process — from research papers and presentations to resumes and creative work — helping them build confidence and finish strong. For students enrolled in STEM-related courses, [the Robert '92 and Heather Pick STEM Center](#) provides one-on-one assistance, open study space, and targeted workshops to support learning in subjects such as math, science, computer science, economics, and more. Both centers are welcoming environments designed to meet students where they are, support different learning styles, and promote success during this busy time of year. Encouragement from family can make a meaningful difference, especially as students balance final assignments and exams.

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## **ACADEMIC SYMPOSIUM**



Green Terror mascot at the Academic Symposium.

Parents and families, you're invited to the **Annual Academic Symposium on Monday, May 4, from 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.** This daylong event showcases the original research, scholarship, and creative achievements of McDaniel students, faculty, and staff. This year's theme — "Pass on What You Have Learned" — celebrates research, mentorship, and discovery! Sessions take place from 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. with a special keynote lunch at 11:30 a.m. by McDaniel alum Cody Knipfer '15, who is currently senior advisor for the U.S. Department of Commerce's Office of Space Commerce. You can view the full schedule [here](#).

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## **ADDITIONAL EVENTS ON THE HILL**

Parents and families, mark your calendars for these upcoming end-of-year events and plan to join us on the Hill! Check out these and other events at [mcdaniel.edu/calendar](https://mcdaniel.edu/calendar).

### **Art, Music, and Theatre**

McDaniel students are featured in upcoming art exhibitions, music concerts, and theatre performances, including:

- **Senior Capstone Exhibitions:** Senior Capstone Exhibition One runs through Friday, April 24, and Senior Capstone Exhibition Two is on view from Tuesday, April 28 through Friday, May 14, with a reception on Thursday, April 30, 5:30-7:30 p.m. The exhibitions and reception are held in Esther Prangley Rice Gallery in Peterson Hall.

- **One-Act Play Festival:** Ten-minute, one-act plays directed and performed by McDaniel students on Thursday, April 30; Friday, May 1; and Saturday, May 2.
- **Annual spring music concerts include:** College Choir Concert (Sunday, April 26), Student African Drum Ensembles (Tuesday, April 28), Singing on Stage (Sunday, May 3), A Cappella Ensemble (Monday, May 4), Jazz Night (Thursday, May 7), College Band Concert (Friday, May 8), and Gospel Choir Concert (Saturday, May 9).

### **Innovation and Entrepreneurship Challenge**

Tuesday, April 28

McDaniel College student finalists compete for cash prizes in this annual competition by pitching their entrepreneurial ideas and products to a panel of experts at 7 p.m. in Naganna Forum, Roj Student Center.

### **McDaniel Cinema Showcase**

Thursday, May 7

Cinema majors premiere their capstone films beginning at 6 p.m. in Decker Auditorium, Lewis Hall of Science. Each screening includes a brief Q&A with the filmmaker. (Note: Some content contains adult material and is intended for mature audiences.)

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## **RESIDENCE LIFE**



North Village residents enjoying spring weather.

## **Returning Student Room Selection**

It's time for room selection! Every April, the Office of Residence Life facilitates our annual room selection process for rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors. We recognize that the room selection process can create excitement, panic, and social anxiety.

Here are a few tips to help your student navigate the process:

1. Review the [Returning Student Housing Playbook](#).

*Note: The playbook was released on April 1. It was updated again on April 15 for Part 2.*

2. Ask your student if they have a game plan.

*Note: RAs and professional staff are available to help your student make connections with others who may be in the same boat*

3. If your student didn't pay the housing deposit, encourage them to contact the Office of Residence Life no later than Friday, May 15.

*Note: We will contact students starting in mid-June by email, phone, and text if they didn't select a bed by the time they check out in May.*

As the campus gears up for final exams, please note that exam week will take place May 11-15. Students should plan to depart 24 hours after their last exam or by 10 a.m. on May 16, whichever is earlier. Students need to move out completely for the May closing.

[Residence Life: Opening & Closing Calendar](#) (The 2026-27 academic year will be updated on this page in June!)

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## **CAMPUS SAFETY**

### **BWI Airport & BWI Train Shuttle – End of Spring 2026 Semester**

As students prepare to leave campus at the end of the spring 2026 semester, McDaniel College will offer a summer break shuttle service to both Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall (BWI) Airport and the BWI Amtrak Train Station.

Pre-registration is required for all shuttle services. Students can access the registration link through the MyMcDaniel Portal by navigating to the Campus Safety section and selecting Transportation.

### **Shuttle Schedule**

Friday, May 15: Departures at 10 a.m., 3 p.m., and 7 p.m.

Saturday, May 16: Departure at 10 a.m.

For questions regarding shuttle service to BWI, please contact Ms. Nora Hood at [nhood@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:nhood@mcdaniel.edu).

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## **OFFICE OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT (OSE)**

The Office of Student Engagement is looking forward to an exciting lineup of events planned for the remainder of the spring semester. Full event details can be found on the OSE page in What's Up McDaniel, with additional updates shared on Instagram ([@mcdaniel\\_ose](https://www.instagram.com/mcdaniel_ose)).



Love Park in Philadelphia.

### **Weekend Blitz**

More information will be released soon via Instagram and What's Up McDaniel.

- **April 25:** A Day in Philly

### **Upcoming events: Save the Dates**

- **April 18:** Porchfest
- **April 20:** Bob Ross Paint Night
- **April 27:** Impact Awards & Greek Awards
- **May 7:** Bubble Soccer & Auntie Anne's Pretzel Truck

### **Porchfest Week Activities**

- **April 14:** Jersey Shore Store
- **April 15:** Cartoons & Cereals
- **April 17:** 2K Musical Chairs
- **April 18:** Porchfest featuring live bands, food trucks, vendors, and activities

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## **FINANCIAL AID**

As we continue through the academic year, the Financial Aid team would like to share a few important reminders and extend our appreciation for the continued support families provide to their students.

Students who plan to continue their college journey next year and have not yet submitted the **2026-27 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)** are strongly encouraged to do so as soon as possible at [studentaid.gov](https://studentaid.gov). Completion of the FAFSA remains a critical step to be considered for federal and institutional financial aid for the upcoming academic year.

Families are also reminded of the college's **Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)** policy. To maintain eligibility for financial aid, students must:

- Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of **2.0 and**
- Successfully complete the majority of the courses they attempt

If a student is considering any schedule changes, we encourage them to connect with their student success coach or a member of the Financial Aid team before making adjustments. Even small changes can affect financial aid eligibility, and our team is always glad to assist students in making informed decisions.

For graduating seniors and their families, now is a good time to start planning for student loan repayment. Federal student loans have a six-month grace period after graduation, and students must complete exit counseling, which provides important information about repayment options and borrower responsibilities.

For continuing students and families, we invite you to explore Financial Aid Fridays on Instagram ([@mcdaniel\\_financial\\_aid](https://www.instagram.com/mcdaniel_financial_aid)), where helpful tips, reminders, and updates are shared throughout the year.

The following Financial Aid team members are available to support students and families:

#### **Students with Last Names A-F**

Emma Sorrell

[emma.sorrell@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:emma.sorrell@mcdaniel.edu)

410-386-4807

#### **Students with Last Names G-M**

Lerlene McAllister

[lerlene.mcallister@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:lerlene.mcallister@mcdaniel.edu)

410-871-3311

#### **Students with Last Names N-Z**

Kenzie Elliott

[melliott@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:melliott@mcdaniel.edu)

410-857-2255

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or concerns. We are committed to partnering with you to support your student's continued success.

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# **WELLNESS CENTER**



If you walk around the Hill right now, you will see the stage set for greatness as trees fill with buds, flowers bring brilliant color to the scenery, and we are surrounded by new life. It's a season full of expectation and excitement in the personal story of each McDaniel student. For most, this time of year awakens a new level of pressure as they prepare to finish classes strong and step into what's next on their paths. What does that look like for your student? Are they soaring in their season? Are they navigating pressures well? Perhaps they are somewhere in the middle, and it varies day to day.

Stress can be healthy, motivating, and, quite frankly, necessary for life! It helps us react, pay attention, and stay safe. College is a key time to learn how to find balance when faced with stressors, recognizing when it's time to push harder and when it's time to breathe and reset. It can be hard to watch your student walk through stressful times, yet how we respond as parents and families can be so impactful.

By checking in with compassion and simply listening to your student, you are doing great work! We know that when we talk about stressors, we feel better. A note of encouragement or a care package is a welcome way to reinforce that you support them in this time. When you sense your student is exhibiting signs of stress, help them do a little self-check!

**Ask your student:**

- How well have you been eating?
- How well have you been sleeping?
- What have you been doing for fun?
- Have you been engaged in your classes?
- Has anything been difficult for you lately?

Remain optimistic and help your student assess how their stress could impact their enjoyment, choices, and overall wellness. Help them see that this stress is anticipated and that it is OK to feel this way. Guide them toward setting goals, understanding their limits, and taking control of their choices, and suggest healthy outlets for the pressure they feel.

**Healthy outlets for students:**

- Go on a walk with a friend.
- Visit What's Up McDaniel and plan to attend an upcoming campus event.
- Visit the Wellness Center portal page for tips on meditation, mindfulness, and other ideas.

If you sense your student could benefit from professional support and guidance, the Wellness Center is here to help. Services are free for full-time undergraduates. Students can make a confidential appointment by calling 410-857-2243, emailing [wellness@mcdaniel.edu](mailto:wellness@mcdaniel.edu), or

scheduling through the [Wellness Center portal page](#). For more information on Wellness Center services, please visit [McDaniel College Student Counseling & Health Services](#).

Best wishes to you and your student as you wrap up the spring semester!

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## **INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT**

### **Celebrate Your Class of 2026 Graduate Through the Senior Class Gift**

As Commencement approaches, families are invited to participate in a McDaniel tradition that celebrates the accomplishments of the Class of 2026. Parents and families can make a gift to honor their graduating senior and support the programs and spaces that shaped their journey on the Hill.

Giving tiers provide meaningful ways to recognize your student, including writing a tribute message to be displayed in the Commencement slideshow, a small celebration gift for your student, and reserving parking for the ceremony (limited spaces available).

#### **Make Your Gift**

Every contribution makes an impact and helps future students experience the same sense of belonging found in places like the Learning Commons @ Hoover Library, the Student Accessibility and Support Services (SASS) Office, and other student-centered areas across campus.

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## **Conversation Starters: Questions to Connect with Your Student About the Hill**

- As the semester draws to a close, what strategies are you using to stay on top of your coursework and prepare for finals?
  - Looking ahead to summer, are there any new experiences — such as internships, jobs, or travel — you're considering to build on your academic and career goals?
  - Reflecting on the past year, what's one thing you're proud of, and how has it influenced your plans for the next year?
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### **Let's Get Social**



Follow McDaniel College social media accounts to be in the know! Don't forget to join our McDaniel College Parent & Families Facebook Group. All accounts can be found on the [Parent & Family Resources](#) page.

Update Your Contact Information

McDaniel College  
[Unsubscribe](#)